

**To:** Grantham, Nancy[Grantham.Nancy@epa.gov]  
**Cc:** Ostrander, David[Ostrander.David@epa.gov]; Ruhl, Christopher[Ruhl.Christopher@epa.gov]  
**From:** McGrath, Shaun  
**Sent:** Sun 9/6/2015 1:27:48 PM  
**Subject:** Re: EPA statement on Gold King mine release

Thx Nancy. I will be adding a couple of items: 1) talking points on my public comments acknowledging that the initial press statement may have come across as cavalier regarding impacts; and 2) talking points regarding the revised release from 1 million gallons (initial estimate) to the 3 million confirmed by USGS stream gage.

## Deliberative Process/Ex. 5

Sent from my iPhone

On Sep 5, 2015, at 6:03 PM, Grantham, Nancy <Grantham.Nancy@epa.gov> wrote:

Hi Shaun,

David Ostrander and I are gathering the materials Mathy discussed on the ride back from the site to the airport yesterday – things he wanted as he prepped for the hearing.

Below is the initial agency press statement on the incident – which he wanted. The statement, to my research, does not appear on the EPA HQ or Region 8 website.

We are also reviewing the ARSG meeting notes we talked about in the car.

## Deliberative Process/Ex. 5

We will also share photos that Chris Ruhl took at the mine which Mathy may find useful.

Please let us know if there are other items we should include in this package tomorrow.

I plan to send Mathy a note this evening to let him know we are doing this.

Thanks

ng

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "Ostrander, David" <Ostrander.David@epa.gov>

**Date:** September 3, 2015 at 8:01:50 PM EDT

**To:** "Germann, Sandy" <[Germann.Sandy@epa.gov](mailto:Germann.Sandy@epa.gov)>  
**Subject:** FW: EPA statement on Gold King mine release

Here is original statement from Aug 5th

**From:** Mylott, Richard  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 05, 2015 9:04 PM  
**To:** McGrath, Shaun; Stavnes, Sandra; Hestmark, Martin; Ostrander, David; Way, Steven; Griswold, Hays; Smith, Paula; Russo, Rebecca; Faulk, Libby; Wharton, Steve; Peterson, Cynthia; Card, Joan; Williams, Laura; Wall, Dan  
**Subject:** FW: EPA statement on Gold King mine release

Fyi, this is the statement we ended up using today. I shared this with the Mayor of Silverton and the local newspaper. We've had no other inquiries as of this evening.

We can revisit this tomorrow as a starting point, pending updated information and additional need for external outreach.

Thanks all for your help with this.

Rich 720-581-8244

**From:** Mylott, Richard  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 05, 2015 5:05 PM  
**To:** '[editor@silvertonstandard.com](mailto:editor@silvertonstandard.com)'  
**Subject:** EPA statement on Gold King mine release

Hi Mark—hope this reaches you. Wanted to share EPA statement regarding today's release.

Regards,

Rich Mylott

USEPA Region 8

303-312-6654

### **EPA Statement**

This morning at approximately 10:30 am, an EPA and State Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety team working to investigate and address contamination at the Gold King Mine in San Juan County, Colo. unexpectedly triggered a large release of mine waste water into the upper portions of Cement Creek. Initial estimates are that the release contained approximately 1M gallons of water that was held behind unconsolidated debris near an abandoned mine portal. There were several workers at the site at the time of the breach, all were unharmed.

The primary environmental concern is the pulse of contaminated water containing sediment and metals flowing as an orange-colored discharge downstream through Cement Creek and into the Animas River.

The Colorado Department of Public Health and the Environment has notified water users downstream of the release so they can take appropriate steps to turn off intakes until the contaminated water passes. The Town of Silverton does not take water out of the affected portions of Cement Creek. Due to current and longstanding water quality impairment associated with heavy metals there are no fish populations in the Cement Creek watershed and populations in the Animas River have historically been impaired for several miles downstream of Silverton. Over the next several days, EPA teams will be sampling and investigating downstream locations to confirm that the release has passed and poses no additional concerns for aquatic life or water users.

“This unfortunate incident underscores the very reason EPA and the State of Colorado are focused on addressing the environmental risks at abandoned mine sites,” said

David Ostrander, director of EPA's emergency response program in Denver. "We are thankful that the personnel working on this mine cleanup project were unharmed. EPA will be assessing downstream conditions to ensure any impacts and concerns are addressed, as necessary."